



## EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCE OF PARENTS ON PEER INFLUENCE ON THEIR ADOLESCENT CHILDREN

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### Abstract

The purpose of the present research was to explore the experience of parents about peer influence on their adolescent children. Adolescence is a period of development they experience various biological and psychological changes. During adolescence, individuals are influenced by various factors in life and among these peers play a vital function. Peers influence adolescents both positively and negatively. Although during adolescence parents move to the back stage, they still play a key role and influence the development of adolescents. During this period the role of parents and the parenting style changes wherein parent assumes the role of friends and develop a good relationship with their children. The study employed interpretative phenomenological approach to understand the personal experiences of parents about peer influence on their adolescent children. Purposive sampling method was used to collect the sample. The sample included 4 parents of the adolescents i.e., 4 mothers and 4 fathers of 4 adolescents. The data was collected through in-depth interview with 20 open ended questions. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. Results showed that parents spend time with their children, mothers are comfortable in sharing information related to bodily changes with their children and avoid the use of technological gadgets by the adolescents however the fathers are uncomfortable in sharing information related to bodily changes with their children and allow them freely to use technology and unaware of their children friends.

**Key words:** Adolescent's, Parents', Peer Influence.

### Introduction

Adolescence is a developmental period in everyone's life and it is a transitional stage that ranges from childhood to the adulthood where they experience various biological and psychological changes like the development of secondary sexual characteristics, etc. Though the physical, psychological and cultural expressions may begin earlier and end later the adolescence period generally corresponds to the teenage years. It is the time of discovery and disorientation.

Erik Erikson, a psychoanalyst formulated the psychosocial stages of human development that every individual has to go through from infancy to late adulthood and in each stage an individual confronts and masters new challenges. The stages have been divided into eight stages of psychosocial development. These stages are hope, will, purpose, competence, fidelity, love, care and wisdom. In each stage an individual faces with psychosocial crisis and successful achievement of each stage lead to healthy and integrated personality. Failure in achievement of any stage leads to reduced ability to complete subsequent stages and leads to unhealthy personality and sense of self. Erickson development of stages is such that each stage depends upon the successful achievement of a previous stage by an individual and uncompleted stages seems to arrive as a threat for the healthy development of an individual. In eight stages of psychosocial development the fifth stage is corresponding to the adolescent phase. McLeod, (2008) put forth that Erickson has greatly lay emphasis on the adolescent phase; because he assume that it is a vital phase for developing an individual identity in the society. In this stage the adolescents are faced with the conflict of identity and role confusion in which they experience some identity crisis and mixed feelings about the ways to fit into the society and may experiment with behavior and thinking and strive to achieve self-chosen identity. Erik Erikson proposed that adolescents gradually achieve a sense of identity about them and move onto the next stage.

During adolescence, along with the biological changes the young adolescents' report change in their relationship with parents, peers, teachers, and others with whom they interact regularly. During this time the parents and the peers influence the adolescents' in the development of identity.

In the period of adolescence, individuals are influenced by various factors in life and among these peers play a vital function. Peer influence is present from birth to death of an individual but it has a significant outcome during adolescence as adolescents begin to rely less upon their parents and become more independent and commence to spend most of their time with their friends. Berger and Rodkin (2011) propose that peer groups are significant social context for shaping individual attributes and behavior. A Peer group is defined as small social group of people with similar age and interests that may bring about a change in the social orientation of adolescents', thereby shifting the adolescents' focus from parents to the peers. As a result they may experience peer pressure. Santor, Messervey and Kusumakar, (2000) as cited in Esen (2012) define peer pressure as "group insistence and encouragement for an individual to be involved in a group activity in a particular way". There can be direct or indirect peer pressure on adolescents. But a good number of the adolescents are more influenced by the thoughts of their peers than their actions. Maxwell (2002) suggests that observation of a friend involving in various risk behaviours predict the high possibility of adolescents indulging in similar kind of behaviour in future.

Although during adolescence parents move to the back stage, they still play a key role and influence the development of adolescents. During this period the role of parents and the parenting style changes wherein parent assumes the role of friends and develop a good relationship with their children.

Marshal and Chassin (2000) showed that there are lower effects of peer group association on girls' alcohol use and higher peer effects on boys alcohol use with the parental support and consistency of discipline. It further reported that for girls, outcome are consistent with the impression that parental support acts as a protective factor that helps the girls to defy the peer influence however for boys' increase in parental hold up and restraint behavior is considered as intimidation to their independence. In the same year 2000, Ma, Shek and Lam showed that adolescents who share a strong bond with their family and friends showed lesser frequencies of rebellious behavior than the adolescents with weaker connection with their family and friends, which indicate that there is a positive correlation between perceived parental influences and frequency of prosocial behavior and negative correlation between perceived parental influences and frequency of rebellious behavior. A study conducted by Yeung and Leadbeater (2010) established that there is a negative correlation between parental support and adolescents' emotional and behavioural problems that run parallel to each other across time.

However, in a collectivist society such as India's the role of family is different from the western countries. Though the structure of the family has been undergoing a transition from joint family system to the nuclear family system the members in the family are emotionally, socially and closely connected with each other throughout their life span. Parents there by still play a very significant role in the development of adolescents.

Collins and Laursen, 2004; Steinberg and Silk, 2002 as cited in Yeung, and Ledbeater, (2010) shows that effective styles of parenting and adolescents' perception of a sympathetic relationship leads to the adolescent well-being whereas increased degree of family conflict, authoritarian style of parenting and adolescents' perception of low support leads to maladjustment and negative outcomes. Adolescents' behavior is directly linked to the parenting styles as Keung and Lam (2000) put forward that there is a positive correlation between the adolescent –parent relationship and adolescents' prosocial deeds and it is negatively linked to the adolescents' anti-social activities.

The quality of time that the parents spend with their grown up children also influences the behavior of adolescents. However due to LPG i.e., Lateralization, Privatization and Globalization and high costs of living both the parents work in order to run the family. As a result the amount and the quality of time that they spend is very minimal and the parental influence on adolescents is also very low which leads them to becoming unaware of behavioural changes in their children and to give them the social support.

There are very few studies conducted in India on the parental experience and awareness about the behaviour changes in their adolescent children during adolescence and their suggestions for utilizing the peer influence for the betterment of the adolescents.

## Method

### Research Question

The present study was intended to explore the experience of parents of the peer influence on their adolescent children.

### Objectives

- To understand the parents' perceptions of experience of peer influence on their wards
- To explore the suggestions given by the parents on utilizing peer influence for the development.

### Research Design

Qualitative research is a method of inquiry employed in the studies of social sciences and it aims to comprehend the in-depth understanding of human behavior and qualitative research investigates the why and how of decision making and not just what, where and when.

The present study employed the interpretative phenomenological approach which involve detailed examination of the participant's life world; it aims to explore the personal experience and how individual make sense of their individual and social world.

Under interpretative phenomenological approach the study included in-depth interview which are used for collecting data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives and experiences.

### Sample

The present study employed Purposive Sampling as a technique of sampling. Purposive sampling is a kind of non-probability sample. It is based on the typicality of the cases to be included in the sample. (Singh, 2002)

### Characteristics of Sample

The sample included 4 parents of the adolescents i.e., 4 mothers and 4 fathers of 4 adolescents. Adolescents were within the age range of 13-16 years.

The adolescents were from the nuclear family and they were staying with their parents in the same family in Bangalore. The parents of the adolescents should be formally employed and adolescent should be fluent in English.

### Method of Data Collection

The data for the study was collected through in-depth interview which are used for collecting data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives and experiences of peer influence. The in-depth interview consisted of 20 open ended questions directed to the adolescents' parents respectively. It is a self-prepared questionnaire validated by counselors in Bangalore.

### Procedure

In the Phase 1 the participants were briefed about the study and informed consent was signed by the participants. Then the socio demographic data were also collected from the participants.

In the Phase 2 the parents both the mother and father were interviewed individually and the data was collected through audio tapes.

In the Phase 3 the audio recordings of the interview was transcribed and the data was analyzed using the process of thematic analysis.

### Data Analysis

The collected interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis approach.

Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However, it also often goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998 as cited in Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006).

Thus the present study employed thematic analysis approach in order to identify and understand various themes emerged in the study and to understand their relationship between them.

### Validation of the Data

The validity of the study was analyzed using member check. That refers to going back to the participants in order to clear the doubts of the researcher in the data. It was employed during the transcription of the interviews and also during the coding of the data. The study also employed memo writing as a measure of validity.

### Ethical Considerations

- Informed consent of the participants was taken before they are included in the study.
- The identities of the participants were kept confidentially.
- The participants were informed that the confidentiality of their responses as well as their results will be maintained.
- The participants was informed that the data would be used only for the research purpose if they uncomfortable it would be destroyed after the study.
- The researcher was refrained from asking personal questions to the participants which they felt uncomfortable.

## Results and Discussion

### Analysis of mother's data

The mother's data has been divided into 8 global themes and assess the mother's perception of peer influence on their adolescent children.

Table 3:-Showing the themes generated on analysis of mother's data

Global theme 1	Organizational theme	Basic themes
Perception about the adolescent	Bahaviour	1.1 Parents 1.2 friends 1.3 others
<b>Global theme 2</b> Perception of adolescent activities	<b>O. T</b> Awareness of activities	<b>B. T</b> 2.1Participation 2.2Interests
<b>Global theme 3</b> Relationship	<b>O. T</b> With Adolescent  With Adolescent friends	<b>B. T</b> 3.1 Friendly/ close 3.2 Dominating 3.3 Aware of Adolescent friends 3.4 interaction with them 3.5 perception about them
<b>Global theme 4</b> Support from parents	<b>O.T</b> To Adolescent	<b>B. T</b> 4.1 By Mother 4.2 By father
<b>G. T 5</b> Quantity of time spend	<b>O.T</b> Availability to adolescent  Activities	<b>B.T</b> 5.1 Mother 5.2 Father 5.3 Talking or sharing with each other 5.4 Playing 5.5 Going out 5.6 Watching movies
<b>G. T 6</b> Providing information related to bodily changes	<b>O.T</b> To Adolescent  Encouraging child to share information	<b>B.T</b> 6.1 By Mother 6.2 By Father 6.3 Adolescent learning through other sources 6.4 By mother 6.5 By father
<b>G. T 7</b> Influence of Technology	<b>O.T</b> By Adolescent	<b>B. T</b> 7.1Mobile 7.2Face book 7.3 TV 7.4 Internet 7.5 Monitoring the usage
<b>G. T 8</b> Perception of peer influence	<b>O. T</b> On Adolescent	<b>B. T</b> 8.1 View about peer influence 8.2 Experience of peer influence on their ward 8.3 suggestions to make peer influence more productive

**Descriptive explanation of themes****01. Perception about Adolescent Behaviour****1a. Behaviour**

- i. Parents
- ii. Friends
- iii. Others

This global theme assesses the mother's perception of adolescent behaviour with parents, with friends and with others.

About the behaviour of the adolescent, all mothers' told that their children are very good and described unique characters of their children. The mother of first participant said that he is very reserved and usually does not share information with others unless he is forced to do so. He keeps everything to himself. *"Reserved in the sense he won't share anything and he keeps the things to himself. He keeps the things to himself and pressure fully when we ask him he'll tell otherwise he won't tell anything about himself. He is that kind of person."* Participant M1, Personal Communication, 2013. He is a good observer and pay attention and easily understands the nonverbal behaviours of others. He is a gang leader and knows all friends and everyone likes him and he also leads all the friends. Teachers, relatives and friends everyone likes him and says that he is intellectual and gifted child.

The mother of second participant told that he is a smart child and loves to play and be to himself and he gets angry when he is blamed or insulted in front of others. *"Nobody should insult him in front of anybody he gets very angry and he does not want to be blamed in front of anybody"*. Participant M2, Personal Communication, 2013. He is social and loves making friends. With others also he is very good but he does not interact with others much he just love to play games alone or with his friends.

The mother of third participant described that she is a good girl, she shares everything with her parents about her day, her thoughts, what happened in school, with teachers, with friends everything she'll share, and she does not hide anything from her parents. *"She'll share everything what happened in the school with me and with her father. And even we also if we think we can share this with her we'll share and her behaviour she is very good"*. Participant M3, Personal Communication, 2013. She is friendly, social and talkative she speaks to everyone in the school and in the church and actively mingles with everyone.

The mother of fourth participant said that she is hard working, intelligent and positive girl, she treats her parents as her friends and interacts with them as friend and shares everything with her parents. She has limit friends and she is introvert and does not actively interact with everybody. *"She is an hard working girl ok she is hard working and the second thing is I can say hard working hm.....good and frankly speaking student hm..... she is hard working and intelligent positive"*. Participant M4, Personal Communication.

**02. Perception of Adolescent Activities****2a. Awareness of activities**

- i. Participation
- ii. Interests

This theme evaluates mothers' awareness of their adolescent children participation in activities in school, at home and outside home.

Mother's reports that the adolescents are interested in sports and actively participate in sports and other cultural activities in school and in other associations. Some of them actively involve themselves into sports and projects while other requires some external motivations to do so like a mother reported that her child participates in activities only when he likes the instructor and other said that he needs some external motivation from parents and friends to participates in the activities.

All the adolescents shares with their mothers about their activities in and outside school and mothers also makes a point that they talk to their children about their activities and also give some suggestions and guidance over their activities.

Most of the mother's reported that they are aware of all the activities of their adolescent and there is no hiding from the parents.

**03. Relationship****3a. with Adolescents**

- i. Friendly
- ii. Dominating

**3b. with adolescent friends**

- i. Aware of adolescent friends
- ii. Interaction with them
- iii. Perception about them

This global theme intends to measure the mother's relationship with their adolescent and with their friends.

All the mothers share a friendly relationship with their children, they share a special bond and they are like friends rather than mother and child, they talk to them, guide them in a friendly way and also share an intimate relationship with their children. *"Very intimate. Very very intimate, primarily I'm attached to him."* Participant M1, Personal Communication, 2013.

Mothers of adolescent boys reported that they will be strict with their children when it is required and one mother told that she makes him to be good citizen in the society and good child to God. *"I demand him not only in his academics but I also demands him to be a good citizen in the society and a good child to god. These two he should fill. And then rest will come accordingly"*. Participant M1, Personal Communication, 2013.

Most of the mothers enquire and know about their child friends. They know their names, qualities and behaviours. They have also made an attempt to interact with them and get to know more about them. Mothers have encouraged children to bring their friends to home and play or spend time at home they have also allowed their children to go to their friends house and spend time.

However one mother reports that she does not know about the friends of her adolescent and she does not want to know and even not attempted to get to know about her child friends. She does not encourage her child to bring friends to home and she also does not send her child to others home. She insist on them playing outside in a playground and coming back home. *“His friends don’t come here to home I don’t encourage also only in the school or only in the church no friends come here and he also does not go and spend time and play with friends in the house like they go out together they play and come back. They have a cycle know they go for cycling nobody goes to friend’s house and stay hours together in the house or something I will not allow also I never allowed also going houses to play and all just they go as a group they play outside in the playground and come back”*. Participant M2, Personal Communication, 2013. The reason for not knowing their children friends is that she is not interested and she said that her child comes home daily before particular time so she did not bother to know about her child friends. However she has seen and spoken to some of his friends when she visited the school.

Mothers perceive their adolescent friends as good, nice, caring and supportive. They said that some of their friends are very supportive while there are some other friends who try to put them down. Some mothers also felt the adolescent friends are quite hi-fi and difficult to mingle and interact with them but they are advised to be satisfied with whatever they have. *“Quite hi-fi. We cannot stand to their range. But what I tell to my son is what they have is for them, what we have we should be satisfied in what we have”*. Participant M1, Personal Communication, 2013. Mothers also reported that if they find some of their adolescent friends as not good, they have advised their children to maintain distance and stay away from that companionship.

#### **04. Support from Mother**

This theme evaluates the financial, moral and social support to the child. A study by Yeung and Leadbeater (2010) investigated the association between peer victimization maladaptive outcomes and the role of parental support. The results of the study showed that higher levels of mother emotional support were associated with lower levels of emotional problems and moderated the effects of physical victimization on maladjustment. The results are agreed in the present study where mothers reported that they spend lot of time with children and help them to come over their problem. All the mothers reported that they always support the child in the entire manner. Financially they gave them money in the case of emergency to buy snacks, stationery things or for the bus charge. But all the mothers agreed that they don’t give big amount to the adolescent who unnecessarily waste the money in bad way like going to malls, cinema and some other things, only if it is worth and needed they provide money to the adolescents. *“Financial we give them because school is very far from home and they should have money to call us back sometimes whenever they are in need and sometimes for lunch and snacks at least to some extent we have to give them money and not to spend to become not like that not like that but we have to give to some extent”*. Participant M1, Personal Communication, 2013.

Socially and emotionally also mothers told that they spend time with them, listens to them about their stories about school or personal difficulties and make adolescents only to arrive at the solution and provide whatever they wish like food, trip, and clothes but only if it is needed and not unnecessarily wasting the money. Some mothers also stated that they sit with their children during their studies and makes them to read and understand their syllabus, *“home works if he wants to sit with me I go and sit with him usually my son wants me to sit with him so that I sit and study with him that is not every time whenever he really needs to be studied he come and ask me so other time when he have home work to do he will do on his own only during exams or tests he wants me to sit with him so I’ll sit with him and make him to do the home work or make him to study byhart it, write it down and ask question and all these things”*, Participant M2, Personal Communication, 2013, and also teach them about the society and ways of behaving in society and with people around and also encourage the child to participate in activities, cultural programmes, sports and project works and also provide ideas and guidance to complete that project.

#### **05. Quantity of Time Spend**

This theme measures the quantity of time spend by mother with their children and the way they spend their time.

Mothers spend average amount of time with their children and during this time some reported that they love playing with the children and usually play indoor games during the holidays *“I’ll play with my kids. 7:45 after the prayer for 15 minutes we’ll play shuttle cock in the veranda only”*, Participant M1, Personal Communication, 2013, and when they are free they enjoy watching TV, movies together as a family, all of them reported that going for theater to watch movie is very seldom and most of them also reported that they like spending time at home by playing and talking to each other rather than going out on holidays where as some other mothers said that they enjoy going out like shopping, to natives during holidays.

All of them reported that they share with each other about their day, experiences and thoughts and discuss about some or other issues. One mother said that she makes the child to read some good articles in newspaper that enlighten thoughts and views about the world and when she reads some good article, jokes she’ll share such information with them and also share her experiences with them *“I’ll also share information about the articles in the newspaper and I’ll read for them and there is one very good article called Bala- Buddhi which comes in Vijay Karnataka Kannada newspaper, it is very beautiful article, each and every day if you read it that is more than enough. That is really for to take your life in good track; I’ll read it out to both of them and I’ll tell them to read some good articles. If I read any articles, or jokes and if I experienced something I’ll come and tell them and I’ll also tell them to read”*, Participant M1, Personal Communication, 2013, and other mother told that it is usually the adolescent who keeps on talking about his school, friends, activities, cartoon characters, jokes and TV programmes and the mother actively listens to him without discouraging him.

### 06. Providing information related to bodily changes by mothers to adolescents'

This includes information about secondary sexual characteristics, ways of dressing and ways to be away from other sex.

Mothers of the adolescent boys reported that they did not tell them anything about the information related to bodily changes specifically however they have provided some information regarding their bodily changes and interaction with girls. A mother told them to keep distance with girls and not to interact with them much and not to experiment with anything on their own but wait for the appropriate time for everything. *"Sometimes we need to guide our children in that way. What I tell for both is be friendly with any girls but not to get along with them. You will be having a bright future hat God has formed. What God has made you will get it, you your self don't make any commitments and you should and don't make any experiments with anything at this stage"*. Participant M1, Personal Communication, 2013. They have also told that now they are growing to be big and they have to study well and behave well in the society.

Some mothers of adolescent girls have given them the information beforehand and some of them after the menstruation however they have provided detail information and clear the doubts of the adolescents. *"After she menstruated I'll tell everything to her. This is what happens and this is how you should take care of yourself and about maintaining cleanliness and health everything I'll tell to her"*. Participant M3, Personal Communication, 2013. They have also told them to maintain a distance with boys and not to interact much with the boys.

Regarding adolescent learning about bodily changes through other sources, most of the parents reported that adolescent understands about bodily changes by attending a course in school. In school they have a class on Life skills where they teach students about changes in the body during puberty and psychological changes within themselves. *"In our school we don't have to explain anything about sex to the children. They have one subject as life skills where they teach everything"*. Participant M1, personal Communication, 2013. Parents also reported that adolescents also learn through observing and talking with their friends. Adolescents also learnt a big deal about bodily changes by observing the changes and development in their elder siblings.

This theme also evaluates the mothers' encouragement to the adolescent to clarify their doubts with mother. All mothers reported that they encourage the children to talk and share about this information with them. For some people the instances of sharing information have never arrived but they were ready and prepared to share and explain these information with the. A mother of an adolescent boy said that her son used to question her by observing the changes in his elder brother body and she clearly explained everything to him and also advised him to not to experiment with this and to wait for the appropriate time. *"Sometimes my second son used to come and ask observing his elder brother growth he used to come and ask what mom Anna is getting under arms hair and all I told him that is the change, that is the change when you become adult you can find yourself also like that I have told and explained to him. One thing what I tell them is you yourself don't try anything, there is a time for everything it will be sort out and that should happen only at that time. You can see all these things in the TV but don't experiment with it that's all"*. Participant M1, Personal Communication, 2013. Mothers of adolescent girls reported that they always encourage their daughter to share all information with them and to clear their doubts without any hesitation.

### 07. Influence of Technology

#### 7a. by adolescents.

- i. Mobile
- ii. Face book
- iii. TV
- iv. Internet
- v. Monitoring the usage

This theme measures the influence of technology on adolescent and also changes in their behaviour.

All the mothers feel that giving mobile to children at this age is not necessary instead they prefer to have their school teachers or the office numbers in the case of emergency. However mothers give their mobiles only when the children go out for the activities or if there is any fests at school. Only one mother of a girl gave the child the mobile and now feels that she needs to restrict her usage of it. She always chat with her friends about their where about all though she share everything with her the mother still feels that she need to completely restrict her usage of mobile. *"Up to 9<sup>th</sup> std, I didn't give her the mobile, when she came to 10<sup>th</sup> std I gave her this mobile chatting, chatting chatting, chatting so that I need to control other than that no problem, No problem"*. Participant M4, Personal Communication, 2013. A mother of a boy feels that he always plays games with mobile and do not give him the mobile.

Children have FB account of their own. But some mothers does not entertain them to use it often as they might not have enough time for studies, they allow them to use in holidays and on Sundays. Some children do not have the FB account. Some mothers do not bother about their use of Face book.

For some children TV is restricted as they are preparing for exams some children watch TV for 1-2 hours a day usually after coming home from school and some of them watch TV on Sundays along with their parents. *"TV is restricted for her; she does not watch TV to that extent"*.

Most of them internet connections at home as it is now required for the projects works. Those who does not have system at home goes to cyber to search for the information and take printout. Going to cyber depends on their project works and frequency of project works. According to mothers children does not go to cyber unnecessarily.

All mothers monitor their children usage of electronic gadgets. They provide the opportunity for their children to use the electronic gadgets as well as they keep a check on their uses of it. Mobile is kept outside in the hall and anyone can see the mobile and the messages. The usage of mobile is also restricted at 10'o clock after that child cannot use their mobile if in case they need to use, the children have to use the mobile in front of the mother. The system is kept outside in the hall and not in the rooms of the child. *"Yes I monitor all their usage of Computer and TV and because of that only we have kept the system outside in the hall not in the room. Even while they are using their cells we are very particular. They should not use their cells after 10'o clock, chatting or whatever they do they should finish with in 10'o clock and in*

our presence it should happen". Participant M1, Personal Communication, 2013. Mothers can monitor their usage of sites and frequency of their use.

### 08. Perception about Peer Influence

#### 8a. on adolescents

- i. View about peer influence
- ii. Experience of peer influence on their ward
- iii. Suggestions to make peer influence more productive

This theme assesses the mother's perception of peer influence and their perception of any changes in their behaviour and suggestion to make peer influence more productive.

Many of the mothers feel that having friends is very good. Although mothers are very close to them like friends but whatever the child share with friends will be completely different from what they share with their parents and they will be very close and comfortable with them. But they also feel the peer pressure is very harmful as it might affect the growth of the child. Some children want to be like their friends so they try everything to be like their friends and join their group. "*Friends play a very important role in life because when they join the friends they want to be like them see how he is, he is doing that I want to do that so they have that that mentality*". Participant M2, Personal Communication, 2013. They ask money to go out for malls, to party etc. to be in their group. And all the parents insists that it depends on the child to make friends and parents cannot intervene in every aspects of their life which affects their independency so the full responsibility of making friends is dependent on the child. However when the parents feel that some friends are not good they share their views and tell their children to break their friendship with them.

Most of the mothers have not observed any changes in their child behaviour due to influence of friends. They also said that from childhood till now their children are same and there are no changes in their behaviour. Children share what happened in the school every day with their parents and does not hide from them. "*No till now I have not observed anything like that because every day she will share what happened in the school with her teachers, with her friends from morning to evening. With me she will not tell much but with her father she will share everything because when they come in bike to home on the way only she will tell everything to him and till now I have not noticed any changes in her behaviour*". Participant M3, Personal Communication, 2013.

Regarding suggestions about making peer influence more productive most of the mother's said that in guiding the children parents plays an very important rather than the friends so first of all parents should develop an intimate relationship with their children and should spend time and talk with their children. They need to share everything and explain what is good and what is bad, what is safe and what is unsafe and through moral stories they should help them to walk in a good way. "*I'll just share all the things to them A to Z, plus or minus, positive, negative, good bad, worth if it's not worth, safe unsafe everything I'll share with my children*". Participant M4, Personal Communication, 2013. Some mothers reports that whatever the parents teach their children is grounded permanently and will remain forever. "*More than the peers it's the parents are first thing who have to teach them because what is taught to the children it will carry with them it will be in their blood*". Participant M2, personal Communication, 2013. Even when the adolescents are in pressure or stress the parents should try to understand it and talk to them freely and make the adolescent to find solution by himself for the problem. All the mothers believed that through proper guidance by mothers they can help the adolescents to be positive.

#### Summary of themes emerged from analysis of mother's data

Mothers have identified good qualities in their children and they are aware of their activities both at home and outside home. They make sure they spend minimum amount of time with their children by listening to their stories about school and other activities and also share their views and thoughts to children. Mothers were comfortable sharing information related to bodily changes with their children and they have also encouraged them to ask and clarify doubts rather than hiding and knowing from other sources. Mothers restricted the use of technology to their children and even when they allow they clearly monitor their usage of it. Mothers are aware of their children friends and they have interacted with all of their friends and perceive them to be good. However there are mixed views regarding this where a mother of a adolescent boy told that she is not aware of any of his friends and she is not interested in knowing his friends and she also does not monitor his usage of technology and do not monitor his usage Mothers felt that peer pressure is harmful and they should listen to parents rather than peers. As a mother told that the teaching of mother will stay in children for life. They reported that they have not observed any changes in their children behaviour due to the influence of friends and they are same from childhood and their relationship with their children is also same and it is not unchanged.

**Analysis of Father’s Data**

The father’s data has been divided into 8 global themes and assess the father’s perception of peer influence on their adolescent.

Table 4:-*Showing the themes generated from the analysis of father’s data*

<b>Global theme 1</b>	<b>Organizational theme</b>	<b>Basic themes</b>
Perception about the adolescent	Bahaviour	1.1 Parents 1.2 friends 1.3 others
<b>Global theme 2</b> Perception of adolescent activities	<b>O. T</b> Awareness of activities	<b>B. T</b> 2.1Participation 2.2Interests
<b>Global theme 3</b> Relationship	<b>O. T</b> With Adolescent  With Adolescent friends	<b>B. T</b> 3.1 Friendly/ close 3.2 Dominating 3.3 Aware of Adolescent friends 3,4 interaction with them 3.5 perception about them
<b>G. T 4</b> Quantity of time spend	<b>O.T</b> Activities	<b>B.T</b> 4.1 Talking or sharing with each other 4.2 Playing 4.3 Going out 4.4 Watching movies
<b>G. T 5</b> Influence of Technology	<b>O.T</b> On Adolescent	<b>B. T</b> 5.1Mobile 5.2Face book 5.3 TV 5.4 Internet 5.5 Monitoring the usage
<b>G. T 6</b> Perception of peer influence	<b>O. T</b> On Adolescent	<b>B. T</b> 6.1 View about peer influence 6.2 Experience of peer influence on their wards. 6.3 suggestions to make peer influence more productive

**Descriptive Explanation of Themes**

**01. Perception about Adolescent**

**1a. behaviour**

- i. Parents*
- ii. Friends*
- iii. Others*

This theme assesses the father’s perception of adolescents’ behaviour with parents, with friends and with others.

All fathers reported that their children are good, smart, good analyzers and thinkers. One parent said that his son way has to be easy otherwise he gets disturbed very soon, he is very sensitive. *“He gets disturbed very soon. His way has to be easy otherwise he gets disturbed. But totally he is a good boy”*. Participant F1, Personal Communication, 2013.Others said their children are bold, and just be to themselves and does not trouble for anything. All of them said that adolescent respects parents, elders and some of them said they understand others who are in needs and also tries to help them. And some parents also reported that adolescent do not interfere in life of others and they just be to themselves.

Fathers said that their children have good and lot of friends and interacts, plays with everyone and shares a good relationship with all friends.

**02. Perception about Adolescent Activities**

**2a. Awareness of activities**

- i. Participation*
- ii. Interests*

This theme evaluates the father’s perception of adolescent activities both at and outside home. All fathers said that their children are very active at home and at school and in some other associations. They actively participates in all activities and functions at school, at home and in associations. One father reported that his son volunteers for many activities at school. *“He is very active at home and in school also he is part of many associations and he is helping there also. He does many volunteer works and very active and if people does not know something he’ll helps them”*. Participant F1, Personal Communication, 2013. Father of a girl said that she is a sport person and a district level player in hockey and school level player in cricket.

The adolescents’ are also interested in sports, dance and music. One father told that his son is interested in music and plays Casio at church for choir and others are interested in paintings, dance and other creative works.

All fathers reported that they are aware of their children activities at home and outside home. They are aware of their adolescent membership in different association and their participation in different activities outside home. *“I’m*

aware of all her activities in front of me only she will do everything where ever I go outside outside activities in front of me she'll do . And I also give guidance to her activities". Participant F3, Personal Communication, 2013.

### 03. Relationship

#### 3a. with Adolescents

- i. Friendly
- ii. Dominating

#### 3b. with Adolescent friends

- i. Aware of adolescent friends
- ii. Interaction with them
- iii. Perception about them

This global theme measures the father's relationship with adolescents and with their friends. It also includes the father's awareness and interactions with adolescent's friends.

Fathers expressed that they shares a friendly relationship with their children, they are very social and friendly with each other. They try to fulfill their requirements and expectations. Father of daughters said that they are friendly with each other and they are free to ask anything and there is no fear between them. "*She is not fear of me and she won't fear also to ask me something so there is nothing like that, she is free and she is bold*". Participant F4, Personal Communication, 2013. One father said that he also teaches his daughter as parent, elder and teacher.

Father of adolescent boys reported that they are friendly as well as strict with their children. One father said that he is very conservative, tough and strict. He keeps his children under his control "*My relationship with children is I'm little strict, tough I can say because always I'm a conservative parent like because of the style I started my parenthood is I always keep them under my control because now that's how I grown up my children I always keep them under my control*" Participation F2, Personal Communication, 2013, and other father said he punish children when they do mistakes and waste their time unnecessarily and he advise them to use their knowledge more productively.

Regarding the relationship with adolescent friends most of the fathers said that they do not know about their children friends, some knows only 2-3 of them, but others knows none of their children friends. Some fathers have seen their children friends when they go to school and when children show their friends to them. "*I know only 2 or 3 of them. I do not much about them, he'll just show me and when he calls them I'll just ask about their names and I'll just ask my son I do not have any contact with his friends*". Participant F1, Personal Communication, 2013. Most of the fathers have not interacted with their children friends where as one father interacts with her friends when he goes to school to drop his daughter. "*I don't know about them I know some 10 to 15 friends they are ok good and I know them and I'll speak with them when I go to school know that time I'll interact*". Participant F3, Personal Communication, 2013.

All fathers report that their children friends are very good and supportive and do not hinder their children studies, and they are like their children only. "*They are like my daughter only I think about their behaviour also I keep on watching them. If they do something some mistake, if they are going to make some mistake I'll warn them*". Participant F3, Personal Communication, 2013. One father who has not all saw his daughter friends perceived them as good based on his observation and trust in his daughter.

### 04. Quantity of time spend

This theme assesses the quantity of time fathers spend with their adolescents and the way they spend time with them.

All fathers reported that after coming from work in evenings or at dinner time they talk to each other about what happened in class, in school, with friends and with teachers etc. One father of an adolescent boy said that the adolescent recently stopped sharing information with him, may be because he thinks it is childish and unnecessary to talk. "*Earlier he used to come and say that fellow did this that ma'am told this and all that is now lacking because one thing is as they growing they will be thinking which one to talk the mature thing is coming into this now*". Participant F2, Personal Communication, 2013. Fathers also said that while watching TV they talk about sports, news and ongoing information in society about crimes, politics etc. They also share their views about it with each other.

On playing with each other some father told that they play mostly indoor games with the children where as other fathers said that they do not play with the children.

Fathers also said that they go out with children but not often, most of them like to spend time at home and only during holidays or due to children insistence they go out and enjoy. One father also takes daughter for trips for once or twice in a year. They go for evening walks with children etc. "*Even we also go out like for shopping if we want to buy dress for children we go out or if we want to go buy fruits, vegetables or for a walk we go out like that. They never thought that her dad never takes her out for a walk or for a trip we do everything*". Participant F4, Personal Communication, 2013.

On watching TV some fathers said that they watch news, songs and good movies together and spend time where as other fathers said that they rarely watch TV with children.

### 05. Influence of Technology

#### 5a. on Adolescents

- i. Mobile
- ii. Face book
- iii. TV
- iv. Internet
- v. Monitoring the usage

This theme evaluates the father's awareness of influence of technology on their wards. Most of the fathers said that mobiles are useful as it is an important tool for communication and helps to contact people in the case of emergency. It is

also useful to download books and study them. It is easy to carry all around with us. *“In mobiles and some pads we can store books, instead of carrying so many books we can download books in mobile and whenever we want we can open and study from it. There are many people who have scored good marks through this kind of technology”*. Participant F4, Personal Communication, 2013. Most of the fathers said that they do not encourage children carrying mobile to school or use it often and for more period of time, but they do send mobile with children in the case of emergency like if there is a fest in the school, on trips and on weekends when they go for other classes they give mobile to the adolescents. Most of the fathers also disagreed with providing own mobile for the adolescent. But one father said he has given very simple handset to his daughter as she goes for tuitions and she'll be late every day. *“Own mobile means everyone has mobile but only old and simple handset which has simple screen, just uses for outgoing and incoming calls and nothing can be seen there and it does not have touch screen, internet connection or android versions”*. Participant F4, Personal Communication, 2013. There is mixed view about adolescent using mobile for playing games, some fathers said that they get angry when adolescent waste time by playing games and other fathers said that they allow adolescent to play games in mobile.

Regarding the use of face book by adolescent many fathers told that they are aware that children has face book account but not very active as some fathers said adolescents' are busy with studies and some others said they do not have computer at home. Whereas some fathers told that they do not allow their children to use face book, chatting and all *“face book chatting those things I don't allow”* Participant F3, Personal Communication, 2013, and some others said they are not aware of their children usage of face book.

On usage of TV, all fathers said that children love to watch TV and if they are alone whole day they spend on watching TV, but they monitor them to watch 1 hour maximum in a day also as children are busy with studies the time of watching TV is reduced.

Most of the parents said that adolescent uses internet for class assignment and project purposes, *“only internet internet because because of information now she is studying in 9<sup>th</sup> know she wants lot of information that she'll take”* Participant F3, Personal Communication, 2013, many of them do not have computer at home and goes to cyber to collect information and to take print outs and they go to cyber only when it is required. *“He'll go to cyber café play and come whenever required only he'll go to cyber otherwise my laptop he'll use or something like that”*. Participant F2, Personal Communication, 2013.

Some father reported that they monitor the adolescent usage of electronic gadgets at least once in a while. They said they check what are they doing and watching in mobile, face book and in internet. *“But we parents should monitor their use. Once in a while we should see what are they watching and doing in their mobile, face book and all. Yes 100% we should see and monitor what they are doing”*. Participant f1, Personal Communication, 2013. While some other said they watch on a superficial level and will not check each and every actions and use of their children. Whereas some other fathers told that they not at all monitor their children usage of these gadgets because of the trust on children that they will not do anything wrong.

## **06. Perception of Peer Influence**

### **6a. on Adolescent**

- i. *View about peer influence*
- ii. *Experience of peer influence on their wards*
- iii. *Suggestions to make peer influence more productive*

This theme measures the fathers' perception of peer influence, experience of peer influence on their wards and suggestions to make peer influence more productive.

Most of the fathers said having friends is good but peer pressure is bad. One father said that this is a more crucial age for adolescents to get easily influenced by people; it is difficult for them to discriminate between good and bad. Peer pressure can lead them in negative way and it can also spoil their images and also affect them personally and emotionally. Differences in attitudes and characters among friends also play an important role in influencing adolescents. *“attitude and the characters of other person and similarly what the way we brought up our children so when we find the differences between the both then we'll say no no you are not with the right friends because the attitude and the characters all this will spoil your images because you joining with them they say your son is with them and so on”*. Participant F2, Personal Communication, 2013. One father told that having 1-2 good friends is better than having 10 friends who may take adolescents in a wrong way.

Regarding the experience of adolescents on peer influence most of the fathers said that their children are not influenced by their friends and there are no changes in their behaviours and activities. A father of a girl said he has not observed any changes in her behaviour and she is unchanged from childhood and even now she shares everything what happened in the class in school everything with father, close to him and does not hide anything from him. *“As far as now I have not noticed any changes in her. Sometimes she'll not tell something to her mother thinking she might scold but she will not hide anything from me she'll share everything with me and as I observed I can say she is not influenced by her friends”*. Participant F3, Personal Communication, 2013. Whereas other father of a girl said that he does not know his daughter friends but as he is observed there are no changes in his daughter behaviour and once in a while she go out with her friends and father gives money and encourage her to go.

A father of a boy said that in primary school the son had arguments and fight with his friends which led to frustration and affected his education and personal life and parents spoke to teacher and changed his section and from then onwards he kept an eye on his son and observes his behaviours and actions and can easily make out any changes in his behaviour and there are no changes in his behavior. *“I say as a father I say no better you stop for example earlier the younger son had couple of friends where they used to fight so that nature always used to accompany him he was having that frustration like that fellow is troubling and all so what we thought is we spoke to his class teacher and requested to change his section”*. Participant F2, Personal Communication, 2013.

On suggestions to make peer influence more productive, most of the fathers said that parents plays an important role in helping the adolescents to utilize peer pressure more effectively. Constant watch and support to adolescent and developing a good and strong relationship between adolescent and parents is necessary to help adolescent withstand the influence and to overcome the influence of friends.

A father believed that it solely depends on the adolescent whether he should be influenced or pressurized from friends or not. He advised adolescents to be satisfied with what they have and should not under estimate themselves in front of friends and also to update general knowledge and current issues which help them interact with everyone. *“See if friends call you somewhere if you can you go but it is not necessary to go, depend on our needs we should decide. Whatever we have we should try to be satisfied with us and try not to pressurize from friends and when is around people he should know how to handle them and should participate in their conversations and then only he can lead his life efficiently”*. Participant F1, Personal Communication, 2013.

The other father told that adolescent might get influenced both positively and negatively by their friends. Parents watch on child and understanding basic reason behind his actions and behaviours helps them to move in a positive way. It is also necessary to explain the adolescent about good and bad and pros and consequences of actions.

A father of a girl reported that, adolescents should try to understand the attitudes and characters of their friends during their initial state of interaction and if they find their friends misusing them then slowly without any fights should break up with them. He also advised to have 2 good friends who are truthful and non-judgers rather than 10 friends who misuse them. *“If we have one or two friends they only will do everything right or wrong they do everything but if we have 10 friends they’ll confuse us one will tell one thing and the other will say another they will not come to a common decision”*. Participant F4, Personal Communication, 2013.

### **07. Support from Father**

This theme assesses the financial, social and emotional support from fathers. Most of the fathers reported that their life is only for their children and they provide support to their children when it is required. *“We the parents provide full support to our child, we are sacrificing our life and concentrating and striving for the development of our children”*. Participant F1, Personal Communication, 2013. Financially most of them agreed that they understand the requirements of the children and according to that they fulfill everything whatever the adolescent need like clothes, other materials, and objects required for education etc. When adolescent asks them about money fathers said that they just see once again whether it is worth and needed and only if it is worth and needed it is granted to them. This is supported by a study conducted by Yeung and Leadbeater (2010) who investigated the association between peer victimization maladaptive outcomes and the role of parental support. The results of the study showed that higher levels of father emotional support were associated with lower levels of adolescents’ emotional and behavioral problems concurrently and across time.

### **08. Providing information related to bodily changes by fathers to adolescents’**

#### **8a. on adolescents**

- i. *View about peer influence*
- ii. *Experience of peer influence on their ward*
- iii. *Suggestions to make peer influence more productive*

This includes information about secondary sexual characteristics, ways of dressing and ways to be away from other sex.

Fathers of adolescent boys reported that it is good to provide these information beforehand only to the adolescents because they feel that parents providing these information is more accurate and correct rather than allowing them to learn through other sources which may mislead them. *“Generally also it is good to provide information with the child. Even we are not given beforehand at least when the child come and ask such questions and says there are some changes happening in their body it is good to share and talk to them openly about these issues. When the children ask about these only if the parents talk and make them understand only it is good then only it become correct. Because when they ask friends or search in other sources it may divert their focus also”*. Participant F1, Personal Communication, 2013. One father said that he never experienced of sharing information related to bodily changes with his children, as children are just growing up according to age and children also did not ask anything about these.

Fathers of adolescent girls given mixed views about providing this information to them. One father said as a parent he provides all the necessary information to his daughter through his wife and he always support her in needs and fulfill other requirements. *“Yeah we share not much I’m not going to talk about it much but as a parent I provide whatever the information necessary to her. Through her mother I’ll share all the things”*. Participant F3, Personal Communication, 2013.

Whereas other father reported that he does not involve himself in these issues. He assumed that children know all information by themselves or might ask his wife. But when he thinks children are going in bad way he tries to change and control them.

Regarding the encouragement from fathers to adolescents to talk openly and clarify their doubts about information related to bodily changes most of the fathers of adolescent boys told that they talk openly and freely at home about all information and encourage the son to ask questions and clarify their doubts. Fathers reported that they do not hide anything from the adolescents and explain everything in detail to them.

Fathers of adolescent girls said that they have not move forward to share information related to bodily changes with their children and children also have not approached them with these doubts. They more share and clear their doubts with their mothers about these issues rather with the father. But they told that as a parent they have provided all the necessary things required by them and also try to fulfill their requirements.

### Summary of themes emerged from analysis of father's data

All fathers have identified good and unique qualities in their children and aware of all their activities at and outside home which show that they spend time with their adolescents knowing about them. They also share their experiences and views with their wards. Fathers are comfortable sharing information related to bodily changes with their sons rather than with their daughters, they have maintained a distance from their daughters regarding these matters. Fathers reported that they allow their children to use all kinds of technology with minimum restrictions however they do not observe the adolescent activities in using them. Most of the fathers are unaware of their adolescent friends which show detachment of fathers from their adolescents and their activities with friends. However all fathers says that there have not observed any changes in the behaviour of adolescents due to the influence of friends.

### Summary

The present study is intended to explore the experience of parents of peer influence on their adolescent children. The study used interpretative phenomenological approach to understand the personal experience of participants. The data is analyzed using thematic analysis approach. The data is divided into three main categories analysis of adolescent's data, analysis of mother's data and analysis of father's data.

### Salient Findings of the analysis of mother's data

Mothers have identified good qualities in their children and they are aware of their activities both at home and outside home. They make sure they spend minimum amount of time with their children by listening to their stories about school and other activities and also share their views and thoughts to children. Mothers were comfortable sharing information related to bodily changes with their children and they have also encouraged them to ask and clarify doubts rather than hiding and knowing from other sources. Mothers restricted the use of technology to their children and even when they allow they clearly monitor their usage of it. Mothers are aware of their children friends and they have interacted with all of their friends and perceive them to be good. However there are mixed vies regarding this where a mother of a adolescent boy told that she is not aware of any of his friends and she is not interested in knowing his friends and she also does not monitor his usage of technology and do not monitor his usage Mothers felt that peer pressure is harmful and they should listen to parents rather than peers. As a mother told that the teaching of mother will stay in children for life. They reported that they have not observed any changes in their children behaviour due to the influence of friends and they are same from childhood and their relationship with their children is also same and it is not unchanged.

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### Limitations

Frist, all data were self-reports. Participants were asked to describe their experience of peer influence on them and on their adolescent children. All responses are highly related to self-desirability of participants. The responses are highly superficial. Further studies need to consider multi-informant and use of some tests to assess the peer influence on adolescents.

Secondly, Most of the participants hail from Christianity. This makes a difference because in Christianity children attends the Sunday school in church which taught values and also addresses issues like time management, sexuality, pressure, coping with stress etc. And in evening all the family members assemble for family prayers. Thus parents get some amount of time to spend with their children.

Thirdly, the data is not saturated and most of participants responded on a superficial level.

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